17.     The device of claim 16 wherein said bottom surface is formed with a cavity and said LED is disposed in said cavity.

18.     The device of claim 16 wherein said LED is oriented to direct light along an axis normal to said top surface.

19.     The device of claim 16 further comprising a plurality of LED's, each being arranged to direct light along said axis.

## REMARKS

Reconsideration of the subject application as amended herein is respectfully requested.

The applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the opportunity of explaining and demonstrating the invention at the interview of February 15, 2000. As explained at the interview, the primary reference (Ku) discloses an edge-illuminated panel. That is, the device includes a panel such as 563 in Fig. 56 with a graphic image, which is illuminated by two LED's disposed peripherally and pointed in a direction parallel to the surfaces of the panel. As a result only portions of the graphic image which intercept the light from the LED's, i.e., portions formed of faces disposed normally or at an angle with respect to the surface of the panel 563, are illuminated. Obviously, this arrangement limits tremendously the shapes and kinds of graphic images that can be illuminated in this manner; as can be seen from the figures. A further disadvantage of this reference is that the LED's are external to the panel. As a result, most of the light from the LED's does not enter the panel 563 and is lost.

As opposed to the Ku reference, a decorative device is disclosed and claimed with a top

and a bottom surface. A graphic image is disposed either on or underneath the top surface while an LED is embedded in the other major surface. Importantly, the LED is oriented so that it directs light toward the graphic image. That is, the light from the LED is directed along an axis normal to the top surface and the graphic image. In another embodiment of the invention, two or more LED's are embedded in the unit, each being oriented to generate light along the axis normal to the top surface.

The subject invention as defined in the amended claims has the following advantages over the prior art:

1. The light source is disposed or imbedded in the unit <u>underneath</u> the graphic image. Since the distance between the light source and the graphic image is much smaller than in Ku, the image is lit much more effectively (*i.e.*, it is brighter) and/or the LED's can be made smaller and/or generate less light. Moreover, because the light source is disposed underneath the <u>whole image</u>, the whole image is illuminated and, hence, is rendered visible to an observer. As explained above, in Ku only elements of the image arranged laterally with respect to the panel are in the light path, and, henceforth, only a minor portion of the actual image is lit.

2. The LED is arranged to direct light through the graphic image directly toward the eyes of an observer. In other words, the light from the LED is directed along an axis normal to the upper surface of the unit. In Ku, the light is transmitted in a direction parallel to the surface of the panel, as a result, the amount of light reaching the eyes of an observer is much less than when the light source is normal to the surface of the panel. Hence, the illumination provided by Ku is much less effective than the illumination provided by the present invention.

3. The light source is embedded in the unit itself. Therefore, virtually <u>all</u> the light generated by the light source is dispersed through the unit and is effective in illuminating it and

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the graphic image. In Ku, the LED's are external of the panel and most of their lights are lost.

In summary, the subject application is patentably distinguished over the prior art and, therefore, should be allowed.

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Respectfully submitted,

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